United Nations CRC/C/LAO/Q/3-6

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
5 March 2018

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of the Child
Seventy-ninth session
17 September–5 October 2018
Item 4 of the provisional agenda
Consideration of reports of States parties

List of issues in relation to the combined third to sixth periodic reports of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

The State party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information (10,700 words maximum), if possible before 15 June 2018. The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Convention during the dialogue with the State party.

Part I

1. Please indicate whether any concrete steps have been taken to implement the various laws and policies outlined in the State party report (CRC/C/LAO/3-6, paras. 7–9), including through the allocation of adequate human, financial and technical resources. With reference to paragraph 9 of the State party report, please specify whether effective monitoring mechanisms are in place to ensure that grants delivered to district administrations through the District Development Fund fully address child protection issues.

2. Please indicate how the merger between the National Commission of Mothers and Children and the National Commission for the Advancement of Women has strengthened the national machinery for the protection of children. Please indicate whether the National Commission for the Advancement of Women, Mothers and Children has a clearly defined mandate, including adequate human and financial resources for its implementation, and whether there is effective coordination between the National Commission and local Commissions.

3. Please clarify whether the local child protection networks and mediation committees referred to in paragraph 18 of the State party's report (CRC/C/LAO/3-6) are mandated to receive and investigate complaints, on or on behalf of children, indicating whether sufficient technical and financial support is available.

4. Please provide the Committee with updated information on the measures taken to reach universal birth registration, through the recently adopted Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Strategy (2016–2025) and corresponding Action Plan (2016–2025), and the results thereof.

5. Please indicate the measures in place to increase budget allocations to the social protection sectors and child related programmes, including for education and health. Please provide information on the targeted budget allocations for children in marginalized and vulnerable situations, in particular children "at risk" or in situations of significant harm, as well as children with disabilities. Please specify whether alternative development funding

sources have been identified to reduce dependence on official international development assistance.

6. Please provide information on whether any concrete steps have been taken to implement the policy of solidarity and equality between ethnic minorities as outlined in the revised Constitution (2015). Please elaborate on any measures that are in place to overcome existing barriers (including linguistic and geographic) limiting access to basic services for children in vulnerable situations, particularly children from ethnic groups, children with disabilities and children living in remote areas.

7. Please provide updated information on measures taken to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, including through implementation of the National Plan of Action to Prevent and Eliminate Violence against Women and Children (2014–2020), particularly by child protection professionals working within the judicial and health sectors. Please elaborate on the available access to remedies identified in paragraph 80 of the State party's report, and identify any support services available for child victims.

8. Please provide updated information on legislative and other measures taken to prohibit corporal punishment in all settings and to raise public awareness about the issue, particularly in the light of the findings outlined in the Lao Social Indicator Survey, which indicates that 42 per cent of adults believe that physical punishment is necessary to properly raise a child.

9. Please update the Committee on any progress made in developing a legal framework for the alternative care of children, including whether any measures have been taken to expand and diversify community-based services provided by professionally trained staff. Please indicate any progress made in protecting children in the informal care system following the rapid situation assessment of children without parental care, conducted in 2016.

10. Please indicate what steps have been taken to implement Decree No. 137 on Persons with Disabilities. Please specify the amount of regular assistance provided to families of children with disabilities, including financial and other forms of support. Please provide information on any specialized institutions for children who have a mental and intellectual disability and on any measures taken to implement inclusive education for them.

11. Please provide updated information on the measures taken to tackle high rates of infant and under-5 mortality, and to improve maternal and infant health services, as well as on the availability of general health services, by improving regional access to adequate institutional and professional capacities and outreach services, particularly in hard-to-reach and remote areas. Please specify what measures are in place to ensure that the national plans on immunization, the reduction of malnutrition and reproductive health are implemented.

12. Please provide the Committee with an update on measures to implement the Law on Juvenile Criminal Procedure, as well as any practical steps taken, such as training of stakeholders and other measures taken to separate detained juveniles from adults and to try them in specialist juvenile courts.

13. Please provide information on the measures taken to implement the Committee's previous recommendations on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (CRC/C/OPSC/LAO/CO/1), and in particular with regard to ensuring that the sale, prostitution and pornography of children are explicitly defined and prohibited in the Criminal Code. Please provide information on whether the State party has established and exercises extraterritorial jurisdiction over all crimes contained within the Optional Protocol.

14. Please provide information on the measures taken to implement the Committee's previous recommendations on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (CRC/C/OPAC/LAO/CO/1), in particular, with regard to criminalizing the recruitment of children by the armed forces and non-State armed groups. Please provide detailed information on the mechanisms in place to identify and provide support to migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee children who may have been recruited in armed conflict abroad.

Part II

15. The Committee invites the State party to provide a brief update (no more than three pages) on the information presented in its report with regard to:

(a) New bills or laws, and their respective regulations;

(b) New institutions (and their mandates) or institutional reforms;

(c) Recently introduced policies, programmes and action plans and their scope and financing;

(d) Recent ratifications of human rights instruments.

Part III

Data, statistics and other information, if available

16. Please provide consolidated information for the past three years on the budget lines regarding children in the fields of education, health, social services and child protection by indicating the percentage of each budget line in terms of the total national budget and gross national product. Please clarify whether there is a budget specifically for the implementation of the Convention.

17. Please provide, if available, updated statistical data disaggregated by age, sex, ethnic origin, national origin, geographic location and socioeconomic status for the past three years, on:

(a) Child victims of abuse, including victims of sexual abuse and exploitation;

(b) Investigations into cases of sexual violence and rape, and the outcomes of the trials, including the penalties for perpetrators and redress and compensation offered to the victims;

(c) Trafficking in children and sexual exploitation;

(d) Children arrested, prosecuted and convicted;

(e) Child marriage;

(f) The enrolment and completion rates, in percentages, of the relevant age groups in pre-primary, primary and secondary schools;

(g) The number and percentage of dropouts and repetitions.

18. Please provide data disaggregated by age, sex, disability, socioeconomic background, ethnic origin and geographical location regarding the situation of children deprived of a family environment, for the past three years, on the number of children:

(a) Separated from their parents;

(b) Placed in institutions;

(c) Placed with foster families;

(d) Adopted domestically or through intercountry adoptions.

19. With reference to paragraph 45 of the State party's report, please clarify why no data has been collected on children with disabilities, indicating whether there are any plans to establish a system of data collection and indicators consistent with the Convention in relation to children with disabilities. In this regard, please provide data, if available, disaggregated by age, sex, type of disability, ethnic origin and geographical location, for the past three years, on the number of children with disabilities:

(a) Living with their families;

(b) Living in institutions;

(c) Attending regular primary schools;

(d) Attending regular secondary schools;

(e) Attending special schools;

(f) Out of school;

(g) Abandoned by their families.

20. Please provide the Committee with an update of any data in the report that may have been outdated by more recent data collected or other new developments.

21. In addition, the State party may list areas affecting children that it considers to be of priority with regard to the implementation of the Convention.